

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01

CIEP-01 XMB-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05

EUR-12 /088 W

----- 093762

R 110800Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5470

INFO USLO PEKING

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, YE, YS

SUBJECT: CHINESE INTEREST IN MACNAMARA'S VISIT

1. DURING MAY 7 FOREIGN MINISTRY RECEPTION, CHINESE AMBASSADOR CHANG TSAN-MING SOUGHT ME OUT TO DISCUSS RECENT USIT TO YEMEN OF ROBERT MACNAMARA, PRESIDENT OF THE WORLD BANK. CHINESE AMBASSADOR EXPRESSED SURPRISE THAT SUCH AN IMPORTANT MAN AS MACNAMARA WOULD VISIT YEMEN. I POINTED OUT TO HIM THAT THE WORLD BANK NOW HAS SEVERAL MAJOR PROJECTS IN YEMEN EITHER PENDING OR UNDER STUDY AND THAT IT WOULD SEEM APPROPRIATE FOR BANK PRESIDENT TO VISIT AT THIS TIME. CHINESE AMBASSADOR WONDERED IF THERE WAS ANY POLITICAL PURPOSE INVOLVED IN VISIT. I NOTED THAT BANK IS A NEUTRAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION WHICH IS TRYING TO HELP MEMBER COUNTRIES IRRESPECTIVE OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. CHINESE AMBASSADOR LAUGHED AND SAID THAT I WAS GIVING HIM DIPLOMATIC REPLY AND OPINED THAT I MUST KNOW MORE ABOUT VISIT THAN I WAS LETTING ON. I ASSURED HIM THAT ALL I KNOW ABOUT VISIT WAS WHAT APPEARED IN LOCAL PRESS AND WHAT I HAD LEARNED FROM MY YEMENI FRIENDS. I POINTED OUT THAT NEITHER BANK NOR ITS PRESIDENT HAD ANY SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH USG OR ITS EMBASSIES ABROAD.

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I OFFERED TO PASS ON TO CHINESE AMBASSADOR WHATEVER INFORMATION

I MIGHT HAVE CONCERNING THE VISIT. CHINESE AMBASSADOR LAUGHED AGAIN AND REPEATED THAT I WAS BEING VERY DIPLOMATIC.

2. CHINESE AMBASSADOR WAS ALSO INTERESTED IN MACNAMARA'S VISIT TO ADEN AND WONDERED IF THIS EVENT PRESAGED RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN US AND PDRY. I AGAIN ASSURED HIM THAT THERE WAS NO CONNECTION BETWEEN ACTIVITIES OF THE BANK AND US DIPLOMATIC INITIATIVES IN AREA. AS FAR AS PDRY CONCERNED, I TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT AT PRESENT TIME THERE ARE NO INDICATIONS OF ANY DESIRE ON PART OF PDRY FOR RE-ESTABLISHMENT RELATIONS; USG, OF COURSE, WOULD BE PREPARED TO CONSIDER ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS, SHOULD PDRY TAKE INITIATIVE. I NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT PDRY STILL HAS TWO AMERICANS IN PRISON ON FALSE CHARGES OF ESPIONAGE AND THAT THESE TWO MEN WOULD HAVE TO BE RELEASED BEFORE MATTER OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS COULD BE DISCUSSED. THE CHINESE AMBASSADOR REPLIED THAT SUCH MATTERS "EASY" TO HANDLE IF THERE IS A DESIRE BY BOTH PARTIES. I TOLD CHINESE AMBASSADOR THAT USG ALWAYS HAS THE DESIRE TO MAINTAIN FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH ALL COUNTRIES AROUND THE WORLD WHICH DESIRE SIMILAR RELATIONS WITH USG. CHINESE AMBASSADOR CONCLUDED THAT SOVIETS ARE VERY ACTIVE IN PDRY AND SUGGESTED THAT PDRY IS SENSITIVE PART OF WORLD IN WHICH USG SHOULD ALSO BE INTERESTED.

3. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAS LEARNED FROM OTHER SOURCES THAT CHINESE EMBASSY HERE BELIEVES THAT MACNAMARA'S VISIT TO YEMEN IS PART OF ORCHESTRATED US EFFORT TO EXPAND AMERICAN INFLUENCE IN YEMEN. MEANWHILE CHINESE AMBASSADOR HAS OPENLY SPOKEN TO OTHER DIPLOMATS ABOUT THE THREAT TO YEMEN FROM SOVIETS WITHOUT AT THE SAME TIME EMPLOYING THE SAME CAVEAT CONCERNING US ACTIVITY HERE. MY RELATIONS WITH CHANG HAVE BEEN FRIENDLY AND HE HAS GONE OUT OF HIS WAY AT SEVERAL SOCIAL FUNCTIONS TO TALK TO ME. OUR CONVERSATIONS IN THE PAST HAVE BEEN LIMITED TO GENERAL SOCIAL CHIT-CHAT BUT SEVERAL TIMES HE HAS ALLUED TO DANGER TO US OF TRUSTING SOVIETS TOO MUCH WHEN THEY TALK ABOUT DETENTE.
SCOTES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SPHERE OF INFLUENCE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: johnsorg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANAA01105
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750165-0147
From: SANAA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750562/aaaaceai.tel
Line Count: 97
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: johnsorg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUL 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUL 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <14 NOV 2003 by johnsorg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHINESE INTEREST IN MACNAMARA'S VISIT
TAGS: OVIP, YE, YS, CH, IBRD, (CHANG TSAN-MING), (ROBERT MACNAMARA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006